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**LINCOLN COUNTY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL CHARGES**

***Former Big River Mining Employee Pleads Guilty to Falsifying MSHA Documents***

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Neil Hasen, 31, of Alkol, Lincoln County, West Virginia, pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers to making a false statement on an on-shift examination form which is required to be maintained in accordance with the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977. Hasen was employed by Big River Mining, LLC, at the Broad Run Mine in Mason County, West Virginia, throughout February 2009. During that time Hasen acted as an assistant foreman, signing forms which indicated that pre-shift and on-shift mine examinations had been properly completed. At the time the defendant signed the forms, he admitted that he was not certified as an assistant foreman and was using another foreman's number to certify that the examinations had been completed. Hasen admitted that he was not qualified to perform the examinations or to certify that they had been performed lawfully. On February 4, 2009, Hasen signed an on-shift report indicating that he had properly examined a section of the mine, and, in doing so, falsely listed his foreman's number on the on-shift report. Hasen further admitted to using the unauthorized foreman number on more than two dozen occasions.

Hasen faces up to 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine when he is sentenced on June 13, 2011.

The investigation was conducted by the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration. Assistant United States Attorney Blaire Malkin is in charge of the prosecution.

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**CHARLESTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL DRUG CHARGES**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Jasper Wemh, 26, of Charleston, pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Thomas E. Johnston to a single-count information charging him with possession with the intent to distribute a controlled substance. On December 29, 2010, Wemh drove to a storage facility in Cross Lanes, Kanawha County, West Virginia where he was approached by law enforcement officers. Wemh, who was the only occupant in the vehicle, consented to a pat down, where approximately \$5,752 cash was found on his person. During a search of the defendant's vehicle, police found a plastic bag containing approximately 17 grams of crack cocaine in a flip-down compartment located between the vehicle's two sun visors. Wemh admitted that he intended to sell the crack cocaine. In addition to the crack cocaine, the defendant also had digital scales in the middle console of the vehicle. The crack cocaine field-tested positive for the presence of cocaine.

Wemh faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$1,000,000 fine when he is sentenced on June 13, 2011.

The Metropolitan Drug Enforcement Network Team (MDENT) conducted the investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Steve Loew is in charge of the prosecution.

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